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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of responding to a status change for a peripheral device comprising:  
determining that a status change has occurred in the peripheral device;  
combining a unique device identifier relevant to the peripheral device with the status change to form an electronic message; and  
transmitting the electronic message across a firewall.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein determining comprises determining that a quantity of a consumable has fallen below a predetermined threshold and wherein transmitting comprises transmitting the electronic message from an embedded web server contained in the peripheral device across a firewall.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein determining comprises determining that an order toner condition exists in a hard copy output engine.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein combining comprises combining the status change with a unique device identifier chosen from a group consisting of: a predetermined account number associated with the peripheral device, a serial number associated with the peripheral device, a vendor email address associated with the peripheral device or a universal resource locator for a web address for a vendor associated with the peripheral device.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting comprises transmitting an electronic message to a vendor of consumables and services relevant to the peripheral device.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the peripheral device is chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and printers.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein determining that a status change has occurred comprises determining that a usage threshold indicative of need for preventive maintenance has been met.

8. An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein that is configured to cause a processor to:

determine that a status change has occurred in the peripheral device;  
combine a unique device identifier relevant to the peripheral device with the status change to form an electronic message; and  
transmit the electronic message across a firewall.

9. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to determine comprises computer readable code configured to cause the processor to determine that a quantity of a consumable has fallen below a predetermined threshold and wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to transmit comprises computer readable code configured to cause a process to transmit the electronic message from an embedded web server contained in the peripheral device across a firewall.

10. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to determine comprises computer readable code configured to cause the processor to determine that an order toner condition exists in a hard copy output engine.

11. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to combine comprises computer readable code configured to cause the processor to combine the status change with a unique device identifier chosen from a group consisting of: a predetermined account number associated with the peripheral device, a serial number associated with the peripheral device, a vendor email address associated with the peripheral device or a universal resource locator for a web address for a vendor associated with the peripheral device.

12. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to transmit comprises computer readable code configured to cause the processor to transmit an electronic message to a vendor of consumables and services relevant to the peripheral device.

13. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the peripheral device is chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and printers.

14. The article of manufacture of claim 8, wherein the computer readable code configured to cause a processor to determine comprises computer readable code configured to cause the processor to determine that a usage threshold indicative of need for preventive maintenance has been met.

15. A computer implemented control system for a hard copy output engine, the system comprising:

- memory configured to store a software module; and
- processing circuitry configured to employ the software module to:
  - determine that a status change has occurred in the peripheral device;
  - combine a unique device identifier relevant to the peripheral device with the status change to form an electronic message; and
  - transmit the electronic message across a firewall.

16. The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein the processor configured to employ the software module to transmit comprises a processor configured to transmit an electronic message to a vendor of consumables and services relevant to the peripheral device and wherein the processor configured to employ the software module to transmit comprises a processor configured to transmit the electronic message from an embedded web server contained in the peripheral device across a firewall.

17. The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein the processor configured to employ the software module to determine comprises a processor configured to employ the software module to determine that a usage threshold indicative of need for preventive maintenance has been met.

18. The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein the processor configured to employ the software module to combine comprises a processor configured to employ the software module to combine the status change with a unique device identifier chosen from a group consisting of: a predetermined account number associated with the peripheral device, a serial number associated with the peripheral device, a vendor email address associated with the peripheral device or a universal resource locator for a web address for a vendor associated with the peripheral device.

19. The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein the hard copy output engine is chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and printers.

20. The computer implemented control system of claim 15, wherein the processor configured to employ the software module to determine comprises a processor configured to employ the software module to determine that an order toner condition exists in a hard copy output engine.

21. A computer instruction signal embodied in a carrier wave carrying instructions that when executed by a processor cause the processor to:  
determine that a status change has occurred in the peripheral device;  
combine a unique device identifier relevant to the peripheral device with the status change to form an electronic message; and  
transmit the electronic message across a firewall.

22. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the computer instruction signal embodied in the carrier wave carrying instructions that cause the processor to determine comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to determine that a quantity of a consumable has fallen below a predetermined threshold and wherein the computer instruction signal configured to cause a processor to transmit comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to transmit the electronic message from an embedded web server contained in the peripheral device across a firewall.

23. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the computer instruction signal embodied in the carrier wave carrying instructions that cause the processor to determine comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to determine that an order toner condition exists in a hard copy output engine.

24. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the computer instruction signal embodied in the carrier wave carrying instructions that cause the processor to combine comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to combine the status change with a unique device identifier chosen from a group consisting of: a predetermined account number associated with the peripheral device, a serial number associated with the peripheral device, a vendor email address associated with the peripheral device or a universal resource locator for a web address for a vendor associated with the peripheral device.

25. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the computer instruction signal embodied in the carrier wave carrying instructions that cause the processor to transmit comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to transmit an electronic message to a vendor of consumables and services relevant to the peripheral device.

26. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the peripheral device is chosen from a group consisting of: facsimile machines, photocopiers and printers.

27. The computer instruction signal of claim 21, wherein the computer instruction signal embodied in the carrier wave carrying instructions that cause the processor to determine comprises a computer instruction signal carrying instructions that when executed cause the processor to determine that a usage threshold indicative of need for preventive maintenance has been met.